

**2013-2014****PRESIDENT**

Joyce Uglow
909 Rock Ridge Road
Burlington, WI 53105
Home: 262-949-3678
E-mail: jpuglow@gmail.com

PRESIDENT ELECT

Kathy Galvin
Home: 920-485-3217
E-mail: kathy.j.galvin@gmail.com

1ST VICE PRESIDENT

Sue Boquist
N113 W16241 Sylvan Circle
Germantown, WI 53022
Home: 262-532-0111
E-mail: sueboquist@gmail.com

2ND VICE PRESIDENT

Barb Novak
Home: 920-205-6269
E-mail: barb.e.novak@gmail.com

3RD VICE PRESIDENT

Gale Gerharz
885 Heritage Trail
Oshkosh, WI 54904-8009
Home: 920-397-2797
E-mail: gerharzwag@aol.com

COORDINATING SECRETARY

Donna Scheidegger
S85 W32230 Roberts Court
Mukwonago, WI 53149-9287
Home: 262-363-8066
E-mail: djs1@wi.rr.com

PUBLIC RELATIONS

Winnie R. Huebsch, Ph.D.
2905 E. Locust Street
Milwaukee, WI 53211
Home: 414-963-0911
E-mail: wrhuebsch@yahoo.com

TREASURER

Sandy Vander Velden
N1301 Cty. M
Hortonville, WI 54944
Home: 920-944-4033
E-mail: sandyvan29@att.net

COMMITTEE COORDINATOR

Deb Zarling
2716 Shady Lane
Neenah, WI 54956
Home: 920-722-4547
E-mail: dezar@new.rr.com

IRA STATE COORDINATOR

Norm Andrews
6964 N. Lincolnshire Circle
Milwaukee, WI 53223
Home: 414-801-5548
E-mail: mister4a@sbcglobal.net

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

Sue Bradley
N7902 E. Friesland Road
Randolph, WI 53956
Phone/Fax: 920-326-6280
E-mail: wsra@wsra.org

Honorable Representative Steve Kestell
Chair Committee on Education
Room 212 North
State Capitol
P.O. Box 8952
Madison, WI 53708

June 19, 2013

Dear Representative Kestell:

On May 29, 2013, the Joint Finance Committee voted to delay implementation of Common Core State Standards in Wisconsin, which were adopted by the state of Wisconsin in 2010. As president of the Wisconsin Reading Association (WSRA) I would like to share with you the WSRA perspective in support of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) for English Language Arts.

The Wisconsin State Reading Association provides leadership, advocacy, and professional learning for the implementation of effective literacy practices, recognizing the complex nature of literacy and engaging students to apply their literacies in meaningful ways in a changing world. WSRA represents approximately 3000 reading teachers, reading specialists, classroom and special education teachers, librarians, professors of reading, and school administrators. WSRA joins the Wisconsin Mathematics Council in expressing the importance of the continued implementation of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) in Wisconsin.

The following points support continued implementation of the CCSS:

The CCSS for English Language Arts are statements of what students in kindergarten through grade 12 should know and be able to do. The standards are statements of the "what" to teach, and the local school districts have the responsibilities to make decisions on the "how" to teach the standards. The standards are not the curriculum.

The Common Core State Standards, which are higher, clearer, and more focused expectations for what students should know and be able to do, have raised the bar in Wisconsin. Standards form the structure for curriculum and are not curriculum unto themselves. Subsequent curriculum writing - that ensures the guaranteed and viable curriculum - is a local school district decision. Since Wisconsin adopted the CCSS in 2010, Wisconsin schools have focused their own curricular planning around the Common Core implementation aligning instruction and designing assessments that inform our instructional goals. Furthermore, school districts have been tailoring their own professional development to meet the needs of their teachers in the implementation process of the CCSS.

For the first time, the United States has a united instructional structure and can now share educational and professional development tools across classrooms, districts, and state lines. Professional organizations such as the International Reading Association and state councils such as WSRA have engaged educators in professional learning opportunities to develop higher order thinking and subsequent instruction. Institutes of Higher Education (IHE) offer courses to undergraduates and graduates; consequently universities are stretching educators to new levels.

Over the course of the past three years professional organizations, CESAs, and the Department of Public Instruction have worked together to develop a common language to help guide state teachers and districts in the implementation process. Thoughtful conversations amongst educators have increased the awareness for what is needed to better prepare students for college and careers.

One intended consequence of the CCSS, which were conceived by the National Governors Association, the CCSSO, Achieve, and ACT has already happened in Wisconsin. A common instructional vernacular has emerged across teachers, classrooms, agencies, schools, districts, and state departments, professional organizations, and publishers who have come to understand the plan set out to create consistency and increased rigor in instruction across the United States. Equity across districts and states is the right of all children.

Throughout the standards-writing process, there were checks and balances in place, public comment periods were provided, advisory groups collaborated, and drafts were posted for public discussion.

The standards, which are clearly stated, rich, and rigorous at each grade level are presented in learning progressions that scaffold instruction across the K-12 grades. In other words, the learning progressions of the CCSS build on one another. The ultimate outcome of the CCSS learning progressions is that students will be better prepared for college and careers.

The Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts have started to move the United States' schools in a more positive direction as it relates to ensuring all students are striving toward higher, more rigorous learning goals. As the president of the Wisconsin State Reading Association, I urge you to stop the "pause" and to support the progress that has been made to date across Wisconsin. I respectfully request to meet with you to discuss Wisconsin's continued support of the Common Core State Standards.

For the students and educators of Wisconsin,
Sincerely,

Joyce Uglow, MSE
2013-2014 WSRA President